

## **It Is Our Duty to Remember**

Rep. Mike Pence

There is a day every year in the fall when we thank those who fought and made it home. Memorial Day is that day every spring when we remember those who didn't.

In a tradition that began just three years after the end of the Civil War, Americans set aside the 30th day of May each year to remember the sacrifice made by our service men and women who died while defending freedom. On May 30, 1868, flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. That practice has continued for more than 140 years as millions of Americans have laid flowers on the graves of soldiers from World War II, Vietnam and as recently as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is our duty to make sure those who served and their families know that we appreciate their willingness to sacrifice for a cause that is to liberate, not to conquer. Today we pay a debt to those we could never repay: the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces, both past and present. It was their duty to serve, and on Memorial Day 2010, it is our duty to remember.

I would like to pay special tribute today to the soldiers, marines and guardsmen from the Sixth Congressional District of Indiana who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. These brave men, like those who went before them, made the ultimate sacrifice so that Americans can enjoy the freedoms we treasure.

For the families of these fallen heroes, the war never ends. It means a husband or wife left alone to look after the kids and manage the house. It means the last memory of a brother was the fishing or hunting trip you took together before he left. That is the cost of freedom.

Today we honor the legacy left by these loved ones and pay tribute to sacrifices made for greater good. I urge every Hoosier to take an hour on Memorial Day to attend a local service remembering our fallen heroes and the families who have made our freedom possible. We must mourn with those who mourn and pray for our soldiers who have laid down a sacrifice for freedom from Valley Forge to the mountains of Jalalabad.

This is their day. Their honor is our memorial.